

**Statement on Naming a Guided Missile Destroyer in Honor of the Late Senator John H. Chafee**

*October 30, 1999*

I am honored to announce today that the 40th ship of the *Arleigh Burke* class of guided missile destroyers will be named in honor of the late Senator John H. Chafee of Rhode Island. Senator Chafee distinguished himself throughout a life dedicated to serving our Nation as a United States Senator, as Secretary of the Navy, as Governor of Rhode Island, and as a United States Marine in World War II and the Korean war. Given Senator Chafee's long association with the sea—with the Marine Corps, the Navy, and the great maritime State of Rhode Island—I can think of no better way to honor his many contributions than to name a warship in his honor.

The ship named in honor of Senator Chafee will be one of the most technologically advanced ships in the United States Navy. It will be capable of performing a wide range of missions in support of U.S. national security. Whether showing the flag in peacetime to build good will with other nations or employing its potent combat power in conflict, the ship will carry on Senator Chafee's legacy of honorable service to our Nation.

**Remarks Following Church Services and an Exchange With Reporters**

*October 31, 1999*

***EgyptAir Flight 990 Aircraft Tragedy***

**The President.** Like all Americans, Hillary and I are very saddened by the crash of the EgyptAir flight off the coast of Massachusetts. We are working on the recovery efforts. We know there has been an extensive loss of life, and we don't yet know what caused the accident. So I really think I can't say any more now, except—

**Q.** Have you talked with anyone, sir?

**The President.** Only our people. They've briefed me. But we don't know, we don't know what the cause of the accident is. We'll keep working until we find out.

**Q.** Concerns about foul play, sir?

**The President.** We don't know. We have no evidence of that at this time, and I think it's better if people draw no conclusions until we know something.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. outside Foundry United Methodist Church. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

**Interview With Bryant Gumbel of the Columbia Broadcast System's "Early Show"**

*October 31, 1999*

**Mr. Gumbel.** Mr. President, first off, thank you very much for the time. I'm grateful.

**The President.** You're welcome. I'm glad to see you. Congratulations on your new program.

**Mr. Gumbel.** Thank you very much.

**The President.** It's going to ruin your golf game getting up at 4 o'clock every morning.

***EgyptAir Flight 990 Aircraft Tragedy***

**Mr. Gumbel.** Well it's not bad, though, you're on the tee by noon so it's okay. Let me turn serious for a moment.

We meet against the backdrop of the EgyptAir 990 crash. At this point in time, have you any reason to believe this was anything other than an accident?

**The President.** No. I don't. But I think it's important that we draw no conclusions about it and just let the investigation take its course.

**Mr. Gumbel.** Given history, given the volatile nature of Mideast relationships, do you see the absence of answers in any way impacting the Mideast talks in Oslo?

**The President.** Based on what I know now, I don't. I had a good talk with President Mubarak. I called him immediately when I got up this morning, and we talked about it a little bit. We're working together with the Egyptian Government in every way we can on this crash. So, now, I don't. So, unless there is some question I don't know about that arises in the next day or 2, I don't think it will.